Constitution of Central Negotiating Division for hostage situations

*232. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to constitute a Central Negotiating Division to tackle hostage situations instead of commando operation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of any groundwork done by the Central Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) There is no such proposal under consideration.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) There exists a contingency plan to deal with any hostage situation in Civil Aviation. In regard to other hostage situations, the primary responsibility rests with the State Governments. The Central Government has however, recently intiated action to organize Hostage Negotiations Courses at National Police Academy (SVPNPA) at Hyderabad for security for police personnel including those from the States.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Madam, what I want to know from the hon. Minister is this. The hostage problem is becoming a universal problem, and, particularly, in our country, terrorism has become a very common thing. If you do not have any definite plan of action, do you have any alternative programme to tackle this menace effectively, without affecting the life of the people who have been taken as hostages?

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, IN-CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): Madam, the hon. Member is right. There is an increasing incidence of terrorism and terrorists have very often made certain vulnerable sections hostages. Recently, we had a very ugly incident in Moscow. Therefore, the premier institution in the country which gives training to police personnel, the National Police Academy, has recently visited that place also. They have undertaken a

special Hostage Negotiation Course to train police personnel from all over the country in dealing with the hostage situation. So, we are conscious of that particular fact, and we have undertaken a special training programme in this regard?

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: My second question, Madam, is, if it is from the States, who is funding? Is the State or the Central Government funding? How many people from each State are going for this kind of training? Is it divided according to the threat perception of the States or is it the standard practice that each State, small or big, would send so many people? What is the police in this regard?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The National Police Academy is a national university king of things where personnel from all States are invited. There is a certain pattern according to which they are invited. It does not depend upon the threat perception. In this particular case, all States are given training, in so far as hostage negotiation is concerned.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri R.S. Gavai.

SHRI R.S. GAVAI: The reply given in columns 'c' and 'd' in fact, indicates that it is the primary responsibility of the States in regard to deal with hostages situation. But recently, the Central Government has taken the initiative and organised a Hostage negotiation Course at National Police Academy, Hyderabad, I think, because the Government of India is of the opinion that it is not within the competence of the State and is beyond their jurisdiction and capacity. Keeping in view the centre started at Hyderabad, personally, I feel that it is not enough to cope with the demands of various States. Is it possible for the Government of India to have further more centres of this nature in the country?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The National Police Academy has not been set up now. It is the premier institution of the country where all the IPS officials are trained, and although when the Constitution was framed, it was supposed that law and order should be exclusively the State Governments' prerogative, over a period of time, we have come to confront with crimes of different nature relating to terrorism or even Mafia gangs spread all over the country which makes it imperative for the Central Government to take a pro-active view and take an initiative in this matter. This Hostage Negotiation Course is a result of this kind of thinking.